

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 10 and 11 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-8 and 11 are allowed.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese document '577 in view of German document (DE 3535212).

Applicant has amended claim 10 to recite --the arm (26) having a length of more than 7 m--. This amendment is supported at least by the exemplary embodiment at page 12 line 5.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no reasonable combination of the applied references that would meet all of the features of claim 10, including this feature.

In the system of claim 10, the recited chamfer guide is provided because the arm is very long. In contrast, In JP' 577, the arm is very short. Therefore, there are few problems with guiding the welding head of JP '577 and a chamfer guide is not necessary.

Therefore, there is no reason to modify the system of JP '577 to add the two features related to the length of the arm or to the chamfer guide.

Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no chamfer guide in the figures of DE' 212. For example, FIG. 1 only shows a guide for the filler metal. However, this is not a "chamfer guide" and can not be used to guide a welding head (or the end of the arm). Because DE '212 does not describe a chamfer guide, there is no reasonable combination of JP '577 and DE '212 that would meet the system of claim 10.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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